Presentation:

My thesis is on dolls and how they represented and reflected the issue of race and self-esteem. The period of concentration is from 1940 through 1970. Dolls reflected America's racial stereotyping with images that were accepted by the majority as the norm and this racial stereotyping was perpetuated for convenience by the majority during the 1940's and 1950's. With the beginning of the Civil Rights Movement, Black Power Movement, and Feminist movement during the 1960's, and continuing with the movements into the 1970's, dolls reflected this revolutionary change with more positive images in dress, design, facial and body anatomy, skin color, and role playing.

I chose this subject because of my passion for ethnic studies and for my other main interest, that of dolls. I'm a collector and I've studied doll books, went to museums, attended doll shows, and so forth.

The two combined, ethnic studies and dolls, provide a valuable insight into the minds of children as evidenced by various studies done in the 1940's through 1970's. This timeframe was extremely important in that the slavery of the past came home to roost with the devastating study by Kenneth and Mamie Clark and resulted in a landmark decision with the United States